



## **International Boundary and Water Commission United States Section**

For immediate release  
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### **HURRICANE PREPARATIONS UNDERWAY**

The United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) is closely monitoring National Weather Service (NWS) warnings and forecasts for Tropical Storm Dolly. The NWS has issued a hurricane warning for portions of the Rio Grande basin near the Gulf of Mexico. The USIBWC operates the Lower Rio Grande Flood Control Project, which consists of a series of flood control levees, dams, and floodways.

In accordance with USIBWC operating guidelines, whenever a tropical depression, storm, or hurricane is within 100 miles of the Rio Grande watershed, or when forecast precipitation could produce a major flood, USIBWC staff go on “stand-by alert” status to initiate preparations such as testing of emergency generators, communications systems, and hydrographic equipment; checking on the availability of additional flood supplies, such as sandbags and sand; checking on the availability of contractors’ equipment and personnel; and checking on the employment of additional staff. As conditions warrant, coordination is begun with federal, state, and local agencies.

Contractors currently constructing the levee-border wall in Hidalgo County on behalf of USIBWC, Hidalgo County Drainage District #1, and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security have already been notified to execute their flood protection plans.

Should the Rio Grande experience flood conditions, USIBWC staff will move into Flood Fight Operations. During this phase of response, crews work 24 hours per day to patrol flood control levees to identify and respond to any problems that could arise such as erosion along the levees, freeboard

encroachment, or seepage on the land side of the levees. Sand bagging operations will be established if needed. Crews also take more frequent flow measurements to track and document the flood.

The USIBWC also exchanges information with the Mexican Section of the Commission regarding flood conditions along the Rio Grande and in both countries. USIBWC provides data about Mexico's Rio Grande tributaries to the NWS, which uses this and U.S. data to formulate flood forecasts. If necessary, the two countries jointly operate the Retamal and Anzalduas Diversion Dams according to established criteria to ensure the equitable diversion of floodwaters into each country's floodway or to make flood releases from Amistad and Falcon International Storage Reservoirs. In May, the U.S. and Mexican Sections of the Commission conducted their annual flood workshop in preparation for the hurricane season.

Residents in the affected region should monitor National Weather Service warnings and forecasts for information about Tropical Storm Dolly and flood watches, warnings, and advisories that could be issued for the Rio Grande Valley.

Current information about Rio Grande flow as well as storage and release data from Amistad and Falcon Dams is available on the USIBWC web page at:

[http://www.ibwc.gov/Water\\_Data/Reports/Index.html](http://www.ibwc.gov/Water_Data/Reports/Index.html)

For more information:

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